

Dr. Archibald Dann House
12 Vick Park A
Rochester
Monroe County
New York

HABS No. NY-5657

HABS
NY,
28. ROCH,
30-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. NY-5657

DR. ARCHIBALD DANN HOUSE

NY,
28-ROCH, 30 -

Location: 12 Vick Park A, Rochester, Monroe County, New York

Present Owner and Occupant: Dr. Charles R. Allison

Present Use: Private residence

Statement of Significance: Although small in scale, this structure is indicative of the stylistic concerns of the development of East Avenue, Rochester's prestigious address during the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century. The house is within the East Avenue Preservation District.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: probably 1878-1881.
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: "... land known as Lot No. 12 on Vick Park A, reference being had to a map of said Park made by Horace Jones and filed in Monroe County Clerk's Office May 27, 1871, ... said lot being forty feet wide, front and rear, and one hundred fifty feet deep ..."

1878 Deed, January 2, 1878, Book 310, p. 459.
From: J. Breck Perkins.
To: Augusta B. Parsons.
For: \$1.00.

"... parcel being part of Lot No. 14, ... Beginning at the northeast corner of said Lot 14; thence south along the line of Avenue "A" fourteen feet. Thence west on a line parallel with the north line of said lot one hundred fifty feet to land now owned by Samuel Wilder. Thence north along Wilder's land fourteen feet. Thence east along the north line of said lot to the place of beginning."

1880 Deed, August 10, 1880, Book 335, p. 95.
From: Mary E. Vick.
To: Augusta B. Parsons.
For: \$1.00.

1880 Deed, August 10, 1800, Book 336, p. 10.
From: Augusta B. Parsons and E. Bloss Parsons.
To: James W. Whitney.
For: \$5,500.00.

After three changes of ownership, Dr. Charles R. Allison and his wife Louise E. purchased the property in 1944.

4. Builder or contractor: Unknown.
5. Original plans: Unknown.
6. Alterations and additions: A copper hooded roof above the entrance door and casement windows in the rear section have been added in recent years.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

The property was a part of the James Vick Nursery. Archibald Dann, owner of the property from 1881 to 1920, was a successful doctor, and a founder of the Doctor's Club, a purely social organization meeting in member's homes. His avocation was the composition of guileless and amusing books of doggerel, primarily a collection of his letters and speeches in verse.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Bibliography:

a. Primary and unpublished sources:

Dann, Archibald. "My Zoo", a loose leaf collection of poetry, Rochester Public Library.

Deeds, Office of Monroe County Clerk.

b. Secondary and published sources:

"Rochester Daily Union and Advertiser," February 13, 1869.

2. Likely sources not yet investigated: Biographical material, Rochester Medical Society.

Prepared by Kevin Patrick Harrington
Society for the Preservation of Landmarks in
Western New York.
January 3, 1967

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The consistency of use of Second Empire characteristics, although presented in a reduced scale, creates a total architectural stylistic expression in this house.
2. Condition of fabric: The house has been well maintained.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Approximately twenty-five feet by forty feet; four bay facade; two story; T-shaped east section and rectangular rear section.
2. Foundations: The elevated rusticated stone foundation is capped by a plain stone water table.
3. Wall construction: The red brick walls are plain coursed.
4. Structural system, framing: The load bearing masonry walls support the wood framing of the second story mansard roof.
5. Chimneys: One capped brick chimney is located in the east central section.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The original heavily molded single leaf wood entrance door is set in a narrow filled flattened arched wood frame. The rear or west entrance has a recessed paneled stone lintel above a contemporary three by four lighted single paneled door.
 - b. Windows: The main first floor paired double hung, two over two light sashed windows in the east section are set in Tudor arched frames with a corbled carved stone cap. Other first floor single, double hung windows have a recessed paneled stone lintel. A three-part projecting bay window to the south is similarly finished. The contemporary three part-casement windows of the kitchen are also finished with a rectangular lintel. All first floor windows have projecting stone sills. All second floor windows are located in dormers.

7. Roof: The two-sectioned mansard roof is faced with slate shingles. The higher roof of the main section to the east and south is fitted with heavily molded gabled dormers containing paired round arched, double hung, two over two light sashed windows. A heavily molded arched dormer with eared frame and single double hung window is located above the entrance at the northeast corner of the facade. All other dormers are gabled, containing single windows. The hipped roofs of the mansards are covered with asphalt. The profile of the roof is heavily molded. A molded eave is supported by paired brackets and plain cornice. The rear section is not bracketed.
8. Porches, stoops, bulkheads: The main entrance has a five step flared masonry stair fitted with a contemporary wrought iron railing. A contemporary seamed copper hood has been inserted into this entrance corner. A small, stepped masonry stoop provides access to the rear door.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plan: The main side entrance provides access to an L-shaped hall located in the north arm of the T-shaped plan. The main living areas are entered from this hall: a study to the east, living room and dining room to the south, bath to the west, and stairway to the north. The kitchen can be reached through the dining room. Five bedrooms and two baths are entered from a narrow east-west hall on the second floor.
2. Stairways: An enclosed, two flight stairway with original newel post and railing extends to the second level of the rear section. A short flight provides access to a small landing hall in the main east section. A steep winder stair between the first and second stories is located at the center of the rear facade. A single flight of stairs provides access to the basement.
3. Flooring: The dining room and living room have narrow hardwood floors laid in an elaborate border pattern of alternate strips of cherry, maple and walnut. The main hall has an oak floor painted white. The second floor is finished with oak flooring.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: All walls and ceilings are

plaster. The dining room ceiling is finished with a paneled wheel motif. Molded spokes extend from a central molded circle containing a drop light fixture to a molded border. Narrow, tongue-and-groove boards are fitted between the spokes.

5. Doorways and doors: There are double, leaded glass doors between the study and living room. Contemporary doors have been fitted into the original frames in the dining room and kitchen. All second floor doors have four panels. All woodwork and doors are painted white.
6. Special decorative features: The grey marble fireplace with incised linear motifs is fitted with a tile surround. There are three glazed tiles by Moyr Smith depicting scenes from Idylls of the King and done in a Pre-Raphaelite style included in the composition. Most windows are fitted with contemporary shutters.
7. Hardware: Some original hardware exists on windows and doors. Most second floor doors are fitted with porcelain knobs.
8. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating: Two gas fire units are located in the basement.
 - b. Lighting: Contemporary.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house faces east, toward a tree-lined street. The narrow fifty-four foot wide lot is further restricted by a cedar fence and privet hedge which encloses the rear garden and extends to the south.
2. Historic landscape design: The subdivision of Vick Park, as originally part of a nursery, contains many large, old ornamental trees including an apricot tree located in the garden.
3. Outbuildings: A Gothic Revival board and batten stable with decorated verge board in the central gable is located to the south and west of the house. It is shared with the property immediately to the south.

Prepared by Amy Hecker
Society for the Preservation
of Landmarks in
Western New York
May, 1973

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This recording project of twenty-six selections of historical and architecturally significant Rochester structures was undertaken in 1966, by the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks in Western New York, Inc., Mrs. Patrick Harrington, Executive Director, in cooperation with the Historic American Buildings Survey, James C. Massey, Chief. The project was under the general direction of John Poppeliers, Senior Historian. Architectural and historical descriptions were contributed by the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks in Western New York, Inc. General photographic documentation was undertaken by Hans Padelt, Senior Engineer, Graflex, on a contractual basis with the Historic American Buildings Survey. The final documentation and editing was done by Susan R. Slade in 1978, for transmittal to the Library of Congress and the impending publication of the Historic American Buildings Survey New York State catalogue.